

RootsTech Call for Presentation

RootsTech 2025 March 6-8, 2025





Same Name, Different Person:
Effective Record Sorting

Susan Skilton AG®

- Please silence all electronic devices
- No audio or video recording
- No photos

rootstech

by FamilySearch

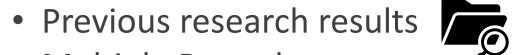








The Quandaries





- Multiple Records
- Easy Answers





Same Names and More

And maybe not all of that is even accurate...

- Same Name
- Same Birthplace
- Same Age
- Same you name itoccupation, migration, spouse name, parent names, sibling names.

Don't Be Led Down the Garden Path



Your ancestor is unique and deserves to be identified by the correct records and connected to the correct lineage.

Best Practices

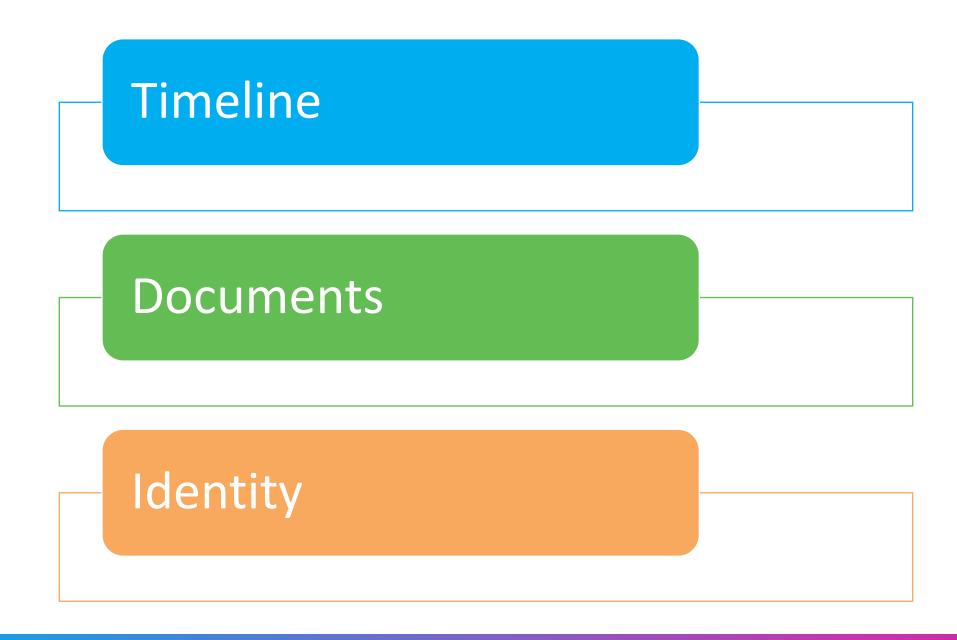


- Cautiously evaluate recordsIdentify possible namesakes
- Correlate with other documentation

Why it is Crucial to Identify the Correct Records for an Ancestor Avoid linking facts that do not match.

Avoid lineage documentation errors.

Eliminate perpetuated errors. Accurately document family history.



Strategies for Accurate Research

Q	Seek the best records	Seek the original images of records wherever possible
/	Build timelines	
	Create summaries	Create a chronological summary of life events for each person.
	Note gaps	Note gaps, overlaps, or inconsistencies in records. Make sure the issues are resolved before linking generations or documenting an ancestor.
•	Study maps	Maps: Use historical maps to understand migration patterns or to note distances between locations.

The Challenges of Records Available

- Scarcity of easily accessed records and the temptation of those at hand
- Incomplete Records
- Research that is false, yet perpetuated and adopted in publications or online

Strategies for Accurate Research

Avoid Assumptions

- Question initial conclusions and seek evidence before linking a record.
- Validate family trees or online profiles with primary sources. This can take time, but it is worth it.



Strategies for Accurate Research

Seek the original images of records wherever possible

Note and Analyze Key Identifiers:

- Dates: Use birth, marriage, death, or census dates to verify timelines.
- Locations: Focus on addresses, towns, or migration patterns.
- Relationships: Cross-check family members, witnesses, or neighbors.
 Identify persons whose names are unusual to trace a family group over time.
- Occupations: A job title can help differentiate individuals. Note, however, that many individuals changed their occupations often in the past.



The Challenges in Names



- Repeated names in groups in a region, a culture, or a time frame.
- Spelling variations and nicknames
- Names often change over time or are recorded inconsistently.

Strategies for Accurate Research: Names

- Be Aware of Name Variations and note patterns.
- Approach records with flexibility regarding names.
- Account for alternative spellings, abbreviations, or cultural translations (e.g., "Johann" vs. "John"). Use wildcard searches in databases for flexible matching (e.g., "Joh*" for John, Jonathan, Johann).
- Note that the names of immigrants to North America may anglicize their names for convenience in spelling.
- Account for middle names adopted as first names.
- Note that in some cultures a baptismal name may be an honorary name for an ancestor or other person of significance, and thus seldom used in other records for an individual.

Strategies for Accurate Research

Seek the original images of records wherever possible

Identify Potential Namesakes:

- Identify individuals indicated on family trees or records sharing the ancestor's name and residence.
- Finding key details for this person can be helpful in sorting the records to identify those belonging to the ancestor.
- Census records and tax records can be useful in quickly ascertaining how many individuals with the same surname lived in the same place at the same time.



Name Changes for Women

- Records for women in earlier centuries were often linked to the men in their lives. They may have been identified after marriage in records only as a Mrs.
- To trace women for whom only a married name is known back in time, it can be helpful to study birth, marriage, and death records for their children. These records may list the mother's maiden name.
- Alternatively, it can be helpful to learn about the woman's siblings. Tracing a sibling back in time should lead to learning more about the family unit and its identity.

Strategies for Accurate Research: Namesakes

List Namesakes

...and trace them over time:

- Census records and tax records can be useful in quickly ascertaining how many individuals with the same surname lived in the same place at the same time. Note ages and age categories, town affiliations, property ownership, wealth or lack of wealth.
- Look for designations such as Sr. or Jr. to distinguish father and son (or younger person).
- Early U.S. census records do not include an exact age but do have age categories. It is often possible to use the categories of age and gender to trace a family unit.



Strategies for Accurate Research: Names Sr. and Jr.

- The designations Sr. and Jr. are sometimes added to names in records
- Distinguish the two relatives by noting;
- ages or age categories
- spouses, siblings, and children
- · occupations and military service
- property ownership and wealth

The Challenges in Locations

Same or similar birth, marriage, residence, or death locations.

Shared migration patterns.

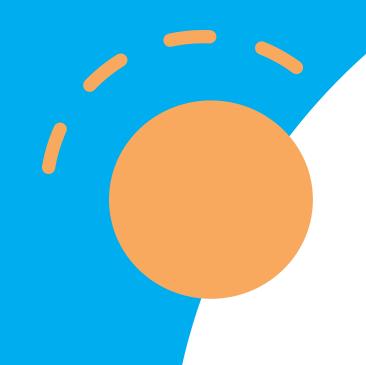
Strategies for Accurate Research

\Longrightarrow

Identify Locations and Trace Migrations

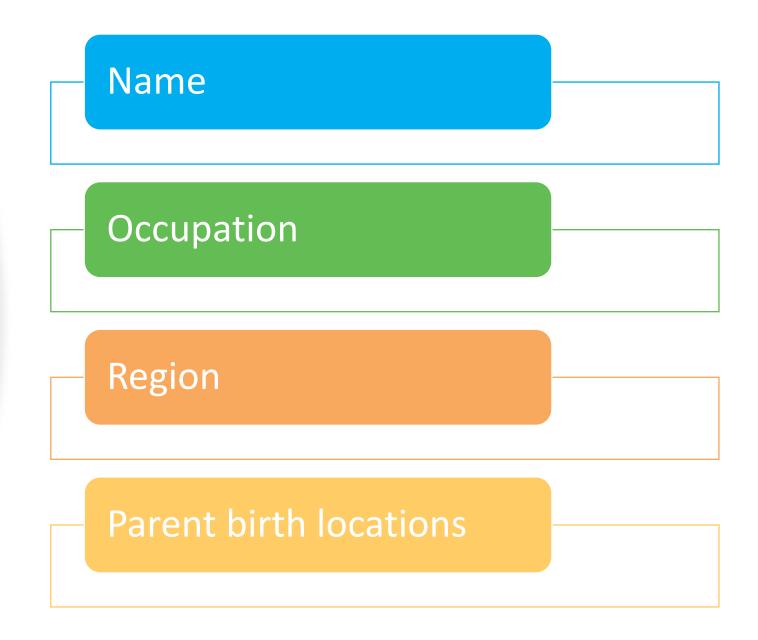


- Learn about boundary changes and name changes for locations
- Identify migration routes
- Review and compare. Determine what locations and distances would be plausible for a couple to meet and marry, or for an individual to start a household or learn a trade
- When a migration pattern is shared by two persons of the same name investigate further



Tracing Migration Further

Example:
Comparing
Records for 2
Jacob Smiths of
the Same Age



1870

Jacob Smith, Cigarmaker

Jacob C. Smith, cigarmaker, was born in 1841.

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27 17	- Nickolas. G. 32 m. or Engineer	Semnestramia.	1	27
28	- Jacob. Co. 19 mm Ecgamaker.	Semmylvami	*	28
29	- Milliam A. 24 mm. Tobacconist.	Temphania	1 -	29

How can we make sure we find this Jacob Smith and not a namesake in 1880?

Jacob Smith, Cigarmaker

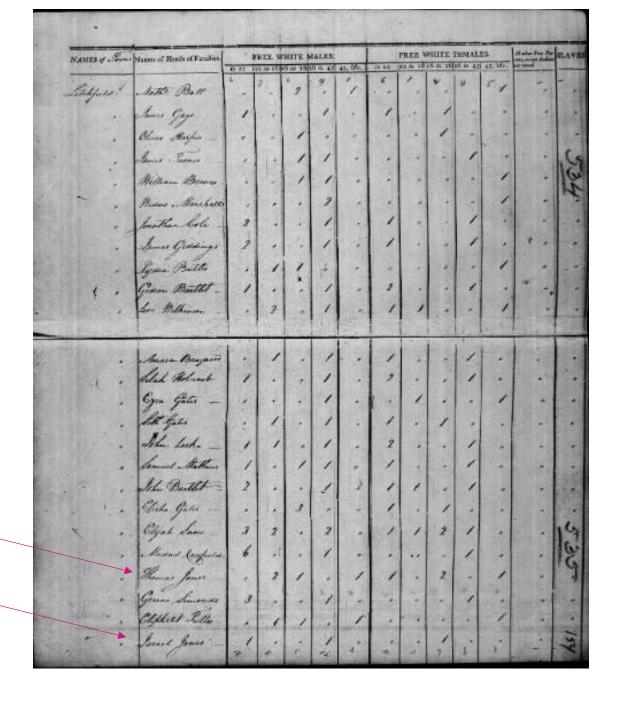
Jacob C. Smith, cigarmaker, was one of these two persons in Philadelphia in 1880.

1880

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Census Example



More Items to Compare



- Physical descriptions
- Signatures
- Religious affiliations

Strategies for Accurate Research

Seek the original images of records wherever possible

Correlate Multiple Sources:

- Combine data from vital records, census, land deeds, probate files, and church registers.
- Seek corroborating details to confirm identities. Always key are date and location.
- For years between census enumerations consult tax records, land exchanges, online newspapers, and city directories.
- Prior to census enumerations you may find military records, tax records, land records, and passenger lists. Some locations are strong in old town records, county records, and court documents.
- Local histories and genealogies may have details, but fact-checking will be necessary.

Strategies for Accurate Research: DNA

Study	Identify	Verify	Verify	
Study DNA Results (if applicable)	Identify suggested shared ancestors for a strong DNA match.	Verify lines using documentary research.	Verify locations of origin for ancestral family branches.	



Conflating
Identities: Rachel
Quackenbush and
Her Namesake

- Same colony (New York) of birth
- Same cultural heritage
- Same name
- Same and similar names for siblings
- Early records with incomplete details

Example: Two Rachels Meet Rachel Quackenbush and Rachel Quackenbush



Baptized on 22 January 1715/16 in Albany, New York, the daughter of Pieter Quackenbush and Neeltje Marinus Married Jacob Van Allen at Fort Hunter, Montgomery County, New York



Baptized on 13 April 1740 in Schenectady, New York, the daughter of Jacob Quackenbush and Gertruuy Van de Werken

Family Groups

Pieter and Neeltje Quackenbush

- David, baptized 1702
- Abraham, baptized 1704
- Machtel, baptized 1705
- Abraham, baptized 1708
- Jeremias, baptized 1713
- Rachel, baptized 1716

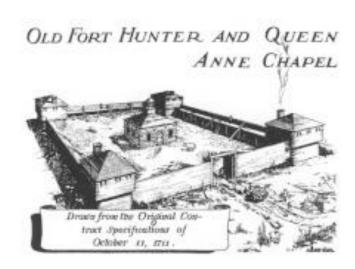
Jacob and Gertruuy Quackenbush

- Abraham, baptized 14 May 1721
- Gerrit, baptized 15 March 1723/4
- Isaac, baptized 21 April 1728
- Maria, baptized 2 October 1731
- Jacob, baptized 13 April 1735
- Machtel, baptized 28 May 1737
- Rachel, baptized 13 April 1740

Residences and Migration

Pieter and Neeltje Quackenbush

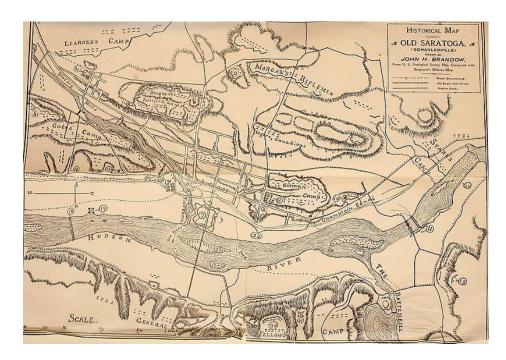
Fort Hunter



Fort Hunter image from *Wikipedia*; Saratoga Map from *Wikimedia Commons*

Jacob and Gertruuy Quackenbush

 Schuylerville (formerly called Saratoga)



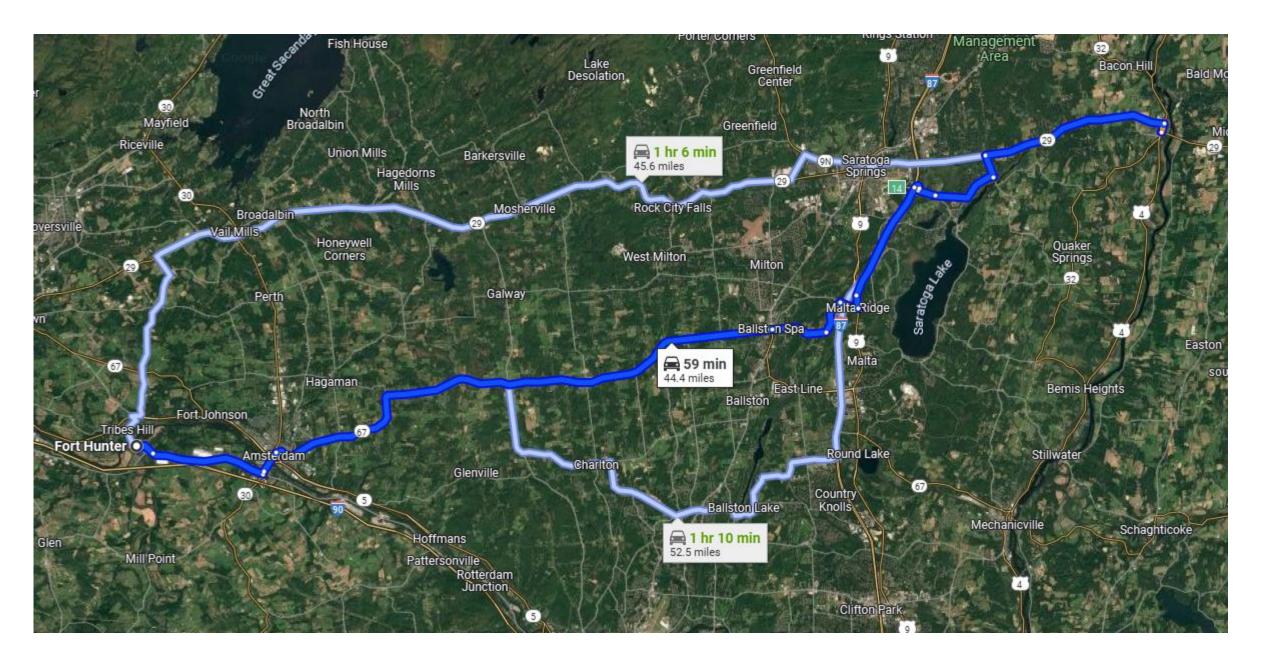
Residences and Migration

Pieter and Neeltje Quackenbush

- Scott's Patent
- Fort Hunter
- Schenectady
- Albany

Jacob and Gertruuy Quackenbush

- Schuylerville (formerly called Saratoga)
- Albany



Which Rachel Was Taken Captive?

- Taken to Canada in 1745
- Contributing factors to the confusion:
 - The Quackenbush name is common in the target region
 - Journals of the time did not include Rachel's first name in all descriptions
 - Published histories have included speculation and assumptions in descriptions of Rachel



Conflation of Identities:

Confused with her older sister, Machtel in descriptions of the family in Quebec

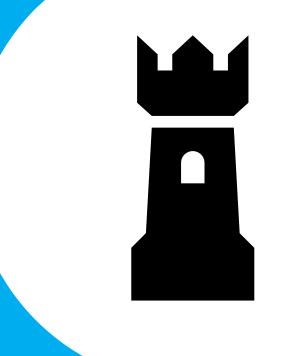
Confused with the Rachel Quackenbush who was born in 1716 and stayed in New York

Off to Canada during King George's War

Capture of Saratoga residents November 1745

Which Rachel was captured with her family?

One Rachel at Fort Hunter; Another in Quebec





Identifying Rachel the captive



Baptism Record

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Immaculée Conception, Catholic Church, Trois Rivières, Quebec, Baptêmes, mariages, sepultres, 1634-1749, p. 217, Rachel Archamboe [Rachel Quackenbush], baptized 9 April 1746, digital image; FamilySearch (https://www.familysearch.org), accessed January 2025.

- Diligent research led to a fascinating story
 of a family taken captive in 1745 in New
 York and the events that followed.
- A journey of discovery led to publishing an article on the story of correcting identities, just one possible positive result of diligent searching and analysis.

Correct Identification and a Story







Recap: Strategies for Accurate Research

Proactive Steps to Avoid Errors



- Build Timelines
- Document Your Sources: Record every detail and source for verification
- Double-Check Suggested Family Connections
- Correlate Names, Dates, and Places

Presenter Contact Information



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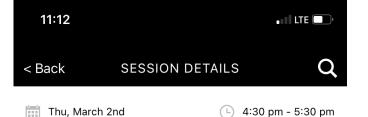


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Feedback

Remember to give feedback in the app!

- Find this session in the RootsTech Mobile App
- 2. Scroll down to Fill Out Survey
- 3. Let us know how this session was



LOCATION

Room 150

EVENT DETAILS

Searching for female ancestors can feel like playing a game of hide and seek in the leaves of the family tree. Name changes and the lack of records means genealogy researchers need to use a different set of strategies to reveal those female ancestors. Learn where to search and how to interpret the clues to the women in your tree.

*All classes are first come, first seated. Adding to your planner does not guarantee a seat.

NOTES













